

**CHAPTER NO. 1019**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2772**

**By Representatives Buck, Scroggs, Kent, Ralph Cole, Bowers**

**Substituted for: Senate Bill No. 2802**

**By Senator Rochelle**

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 40, Chapter 11, relative to professional bondsmen.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 40, Chapter 11, Part 3, is amended by adding the following new section:

40-11-3\_\_\_. Bounty hunting. (a)(1) "Bounty hunting" is defined as a person who acts as an agent of a professional bondsman who attempts to, or takes into custody a person who has failed to appear in court and whose bond has been forfeited, for a fee, the payment of which is contingent upon the taking of a person into custody and returning said person to the custody of the professional bondsman for whom the bounty hunter works; provided, however, that bounty hunting shall not include the taking into custody of a person by a professional bondsman.

(b) No person who has been convicted of a felony shall serve as a bounty hunter in the state of Tennessee. Persons having been convicted of a felony who perform the services of a bounty hunter as defined herein shall be guilty of a criminal offense, punishable as a Class A misdemeanor.

(c) Before a bounty hunter takes into custody any person who has failed to appear in court, such bounty hunter shall present to the office of the appropriate law enforcement officer of the political subdivision where the taking will occur:

(1) a copy of the applicable warrant;

(2) a copy of the bond; and

(3) proper credentials from a professional bondsman in Tennessee or another state verifying that the bounty hunter is an agent of a professional bondsman.

Failure to present all of the proper credentials as specified herein to the office of the appropriate law enforcement officer prior to taking any person into custody shall be punishable as a Class A misdemeanor.

A professional bondsman, who knowingly employs a convicted felon to act as an agent of such bondsman for purposes of taking into custody a person who failed to appear in court, commits a Class A misdemeanor.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

PASSED: April 29, 1998

  
JIMMY RAIFEH, SPEAKER  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

  
JOHN S. WILDER  
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE

APPROVED this 18<sup>th</sup> day of May 1998

  
DON SNOGRASS, GOVERNOR